average annual addition to the labour force, which is projected at 0.7 crore per annum during the period 2002-07.

Regulatory authority for transport infrastructure sector

2577. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have mooted a single regulatory authority for transport infrastructure sector to boost the economy;

(b) whether the PMO is working with the Planning Commission to finalise the proposal and bring under an omnibus umbrella the regulatory regime for sectors like roads, ports, civil aviations and railways;

(c) if so, -the details thereof and by when the scheme would be implemented; and

(d) whether Planning Commission had convened its first ever meeting to deal exclusively with the myriad infrastructural, social and economical problems plaguing Mumbai, the country's financial capital and if so, the decision taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) to (c) There is no such proposal to have a single regulatory authority for transport sector. However, a note on regulatory issues for the infrastructure sector is under preparation and is likely to be submitted to Committee on Infrastructure within three months.

(d) Yes, Sir. A meeting was held on 22nd November, 2004 in the Planning Commission with the officers of the Government of Maharashtra. Three key areas for Mumbai's transformation were indicated, namely, transport infrastructural, housing and other infrastructure. These proposals are at an early stage of formulation and the State Govt. has not yet developed them into implementable projects with the necessary financial tie up.

Number of SC/ST families below poverty line

†2578. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of families related to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Tribes/Other Backward Classes and weaker section of society living below poverty line, State-wise;

(b) whether the number of such families have increased during the last three years;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of the steps being taken for upliftment of these weaker families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) Planning Commission does not estimate the number of families living below the Poverty Line in the country. However, it estimates poverty at national and state level from the large sample survey on Household Consumer Expenditure conducted by the National Sample Organisation (NSSO) at an interval of approximately five years. The latest such survey was conducted in 1999-2000 (NSS 55th Round). On the basis of this Household Consumer Expenditure Survey, the percentage of SC/ ST persons living Below Poverty Line in 1999-2000 for the major states in enclosed as Statement (See below). The corresponding data for Other Backward Classes and weaker sections of society are separately not available.

(b) and (c) The most recent NSSO data on Household Consumption Expenditure is available only for 1999-2000. As such the data for the last three years are not available.

(d) The Government has taken three pronged strategy of Social Empowerment, Economic Empowerment and Social Justice, with an ultimate aim to fulfil the Constitutional commitment of raising the status of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes at par with the rest of the society. The approach adopted to empower these groups is to achieve overall improvement in their socio-economic status through attending to their special problems and needs.

Economic empowerment of these weaker sections of SCs/OBCs and Minorities has always been accorded priority especially focusing poverty alleviation through promoting employment and income generating activities. To this effect, various employment-cum-income generation activities are being implemented with the objective of making these disadvantaged groups economically independent and self-reliant. Towards promoting economic

development amongst SCs and STs, Special Central Assistances (SCA) to Special Component Plan (SCP) and Tribal Sub-Plan (TSP) are being extended to states/UTs on the basis of their popultion and relative backwardness. Special efforts are also being made through National Scheduled Castes Finance & Development Corporation (NSCFDC), State SC Development Corporations (SCDCs), National Safai Karamchari Finance & Development Corporation (NSKFDC), National Scheduled Tribes Finance & Development Corporation (NSTFDC), National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) and National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation (NMDFC) for economic development of these socially disadvantaged groups. These Corporations also provide skill and entrepreneurial training to unemployed youth through reputed training institutions.

Besides, for poverty alleviation in rural areas, the Ministry of Rural Development is implementing two programmes i.e. Sampobrna Gramin Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and Swamjayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SGSY) a wage employment and self-employment programmes respectively. By these two programmes SC/ST families are also benefited. During 2003-04, at national level 8560.24 lakh mandays of employment were generated, of which 2827.23 lakh mandays were generated for scheduled castes and 2025.03 lakh mandays were generated for scheduled tribes respectively, under self-employment programme, SGSY, during 2003-04 the total number of Swarozgaris assisted at national level was 896424 of which 275186 no. of Swarozgaris were from scheduled castes communities and 13821 no. of Swarozgaris were from scheduled tribes communities.

In urban areas, the Ministry of Urban Employments Poverty Alleviation is implementing a Centrally Sponsored urban poverty alleviation programme called Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY) through all the States/UTs w.e.f. 1.12.1997. Under the Urban, Self-Employment Programme (USEP) component of this scheme urban unemployed or underemployed poor living below the poverty line are encouraged to set up self-employment ventures relating to servicing, petty business and manufacturing units. There are no minimum educational qualifications for the beneficiaries under this scheme. However, scheme is not applicable to the beneficiaries educated beyond the IX standard. There is a special sub-component under USEP component of SJSRY called Development of Women and Child in Urban Areas (DWCUA), which is intended for urban

poor women only for facilitating them to set up employment ventures in groups. A DWCUA group is minimum of 10 urban poor women. During 2003-04,19884 no. of Scheduled Castes people under USEP (subsidy) sub-component, and 8494 no. of Scheduled Castes people under DWCUA groups were assisted to set up self-employment ventures under Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana.

Statement

Percentage of SC and ST population Below Poverty Line by States for 1999-2000

SI. No.	States	Rural			Urban		
		Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Combined	Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Combined
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16.49	23.82	11.14	41.42	44.99	26.53
2.	Assam	44.00	38.73	40.20	19.99	2.70	7.47
3.	Bihar	59.81	59.68	44.22	51.91	39.47	32.95
4.	Gujarat	17.77	29.11	13.17	29.13	36.66	15.49
5.	Haryana	19.03	—	8.27	25.38	—	9.99
6.	Himachal Pradesh	13.15	5.73	7.94	6.74	—	4.63
7.	Karnataka	26.22	25.49	17.36	47.01	51.37	25.25
8.	Kerala	14.64	24.20	9.38	24.15	—	20.27
9.	Madhya Pradesh	41.29	56.26	37.09	54.24	52.59	38.54
10.	Maharashtra	33.27	43.56	23.82	39.88	42.98	26.91
11.	Orissa	51.83	73.93	48.13	70.59	59.59	43.13
12.	Punjab	12.39	17.99	6.44	11.30	12.95	5.80
13.	Rajasthan	19.62	25.27	13.65	41.82	20.71	19.85
14.	Tamil Nadu	32.59	43.20	20.55	44.94	5.22	22.17
15.	Uttar Pradesh	43.65	34.06	31.22	43.51	13.27	30.90
16.	West Bengal	35.10	50.02	31.82	28.15	31.88	14.86
17.	All India	36.25	45.86	27.11	38.47	34.75	23.65

N.B. (i) The Poverty Line for all population is used for SC's and STs.

(ii) All India poverty ratio worked out from the NSS distribution of persons is (implicit) all-India poverty and line.